

# SB1140 Performance Based Operating Funding Allocation Phase 3 – 2016 and Beyond

Working Group Meeting  
March 14, 2014



# Agenda

- Progress to Date
- Exceptional Performance Measures
- Funding
- Other Possible Performance Measures & Grant Opportunities
  - Congestion Mitigation
  - Fulfillment of Transit Dependent Outcomes
- Data Collection Practices
- Next Steps

# Progress to Date

- Items discussed in the last Working Group meeting:
  - **Data Collection:** Takeaways from peer agency interviews and next steps
  - **Exceptional Performance:** Conducted initial discussion of possible approaches, and detailed analysis to be discussed
  - **Congestion Mitigation:** Drafted a potential approach to implement as a Discretionary pilot program
  - **Transit Dependent Outcomes:** Drafted a potential approach to implement as a Discretionary pilot program
- Sizing Transportation Systems Memorandum
  - Sent to Working Group on January 27 and comments received.

STRATEGIC CONSULTING SERVICES

# Exceptional Performance

# Key Takeaways from Last Working Group Meeting

- The same performance metrics used for the operating allocation should be applied to determine exceptional performance.
  - Passengers per Revenue Hour
  - Passenger per Revenue Mile
  - Net Cost per Passenger
- This measure should ensure that exceptionally performing agencies are not penalized for showing lesser than Statewide average growth

# Key Analysis Questions

- Address exceptional performance only if trend factor  $< 1$  or regardless of trend?
  - Agencies that are “treading water” versus those showing significant downward trend
- Criteria defining exceptional performance
  - For example: top 5 percent among nation-wide peers, top 10% among Commonwealth systems
- What level of detail/data analytics is reasonable to determine exceptional performer?

# Approaches Analyzed

- Statewide measurement using OLGA Data: Identify Virginia agencies that lag statewide performance and determine those that are exceptional performers for each of the measures used in the operating formula
- Nationwide peer analysis (NTD Data): Explore both Agency-wide and Mode-specific comparisons for sample agencies.
  - Used 2007-12 data from NTD for peer selection and performance measure calculation
  - Criterion used: Top 5% of peer systems

# Statewide Systems Ranking

## Analysis Steps

- Identify agencies with performance measures lagging Statewide average (trend factor  $<1.0$ )
  - Highlighted in YELLOW agencies with performance trend lagging behind statewide average with trend factors between 0.95 and 1.0 (“treading water”) and in RED agencies with trend factor  $<0.95$  (significant downward trend)
- Compute average of the performance measures over the three (or two) years of data submitted
- Compute the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile value for each of the performance measures for all systems excluding WMATA and VRE
- Determine which agencies perform above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for each measure (BLUE)

# Statewide Systems Ranking

## 2011-13 Data

- 24 systems have at least one performance measure lagging behind statewide average growth trend, but only 19 of these are “treading water” while the other 5 show a significant downward trend.
  - Should the agencies showing significant downward trend not be penalized?
- Only 4 agencies qualify as being “exceptional” for the performance measures in which they are treading water relative to other Virginia agencies
- There are other examples where agencies qualify as exceptional for a performance measure but do not lag behind Statewide average growth, and are not penalized

# Statewide Systems Ranking

## 2011-13 Data

- For agencies that are treading water AND exceptional performers, the trend factor for the respective performance measure may be reset to 1.00 effectively taking away the penalty resulting from the performance-based formula.
- The resulting factors were normalized and applied to the same allocation
  - Thus, in order for some agencies to avoid being penalized, funds to other agencies across the state are adjusted

# Statewide Systems Ranking

## Pros and Cons

### **Pros:**

- Easily accomplished with data submitted by the agencies for the operating allocation; quick to perform
- Provides quick skim to determine which agencies are being penalized and which ones could potentially be exceptional. Could point to where further detailed analysis can be undertaken.

### **Cons:**

- Any analysis like this must address WMATA and VRE separately because of order of scale differences

# Nationwide Peer Analysis

## Analysis Steps

- Access NTD data through the *Florida Transportation Information System's (FTIS) Integrated National Transit Database Analysis System (INTDAS)* interface (ftis.org)
- Select peers for each agency using either preset (TCRP) peer selection method, or customize the peer selection process
  - Top 10 peers selected for each example agency
  - Peers are different for agency-wide comparison as against specific-mode comparison although there are overlaps.
- For selected peers download 2007-12 data for performance variables used in the Operating allocation

# Nationwide Peer Analysis

## Analysis Steps (continued)

- Calculate DRPT performance measures
  - Passengers/Revenue Hour,
  - Passengers/Revenue Mile,
  - Net Cost per Passenger
- Determine 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for each performance factor for target agency and peers
- Determine if target agency's performance is above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Determine if the performance measure that is exceptional is also lagging Statewide average growth trends.
- If yes, determine appropriate adjustment to neutralize operating formula penalty.

# Exceptional Performance

## Discussion Questions

- What is the acceptable level of effort for this analysis?
- What should be the threshold for exceptional performance?
- How many factors should define exceptional performance?
- Should exceptional performance be defined relative to state agencies' performance or national peers?
- Should all agencies with exceptional performance have their factors adjusted, or only those treading water?
- What parameters to define which agencies have “maxed out”?

# Funding Options

# Funding Options

- **Mass Transit Fund Operating Assistance**
  - Requires CTB, general assembly action to re-allocate funding
  - Earliest possible action is 2016 legislative session
- **Demonstration Project Assistance**
  - Existing program supports innovative investments in all functional areas of public transportation
- **Federal Funds**
  - Surface Transportation Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program
  - Generally committed to existing purposes, often highway projects
- **House Bill 2**
  - Requires evaluation to prioritize allocation of funds
  - Funds may support TDM and operational improvements
  - Transit must compete with highway projects for funding

# DRPT Special Programs

- **Revenue:** Approximately \$6.0 million annually
- **Uses:** Ridesharing, TDM, experimental transit, public transit promotion, enhanced provision of transit services, operation studies, technical assistance
- **Recipients:** local governing body, planning district commission, transportation district commission, public transit corp., DRPT

# Demonstration Project Assistance

- Flexible program that invests in projects to:
  - Improve the efficiency of public transportation providers in all functional areas
  - Offer creative approaches to identify and access public transportation markets
  - Increase private sector involvement in all areas of public transportation
  - Raise the utilization and productivity of existing public transportation services
  - Supports safety and security investments
- Proposed funding source for Congestion Mitigation and Transit Dependent Outcomes pilot discretionary grant programs

# Congestion Mitigation

# Key Takeaways

## Prior Working Group Meetings

- **Objective:** To provide transit service that improves mobility where transit is congested
- General support for discretionary assistance supporting:
  - Improved service along existing corridors including additional peak vehicles, reduced headways, and improved reliability
  - Parallel or tripper service to supplement existing service
  - Additional service to address park-and-ride lot demand, including feeder service

# Key Takeaways

## Prior Working Group Meetings (continued)

- General agreement regarding basic program structure:
  - Combined application for capital and operating
  - Provides seed money for additional service
  - Should favor applicants who commit to locally funding program after state funding assistance expires
  - Allows state to learn from pilot before attempting to integrate into primary operating funding formula
- Application should detail:
  - Proposed plan to accomplish the congestion mitigation goal
  - Estimated operating cost of the service
  - Estimated capital investment to provide service
- 2-year grant duration

# Implementation Strategy

## Discretionary Pilot Program

- Structure according to key takeaways of prior working group meetings
- Participation open to all agencies in the Commonwealth
- Pilot through existing Demonstration Project Assistance program
- Maximum state matching ratio of 80 percent (remainder local match) – step down funding over time

# Implementation Strategy

## Application Process

- Detail congested conditions and need for transit enhancements
  - Location of corridor and surrounding areas
  - Apply quantitative measures to describe the congestion
- Describe proposed operating solutions
  - Explain how proposed service will address transit congestion
  - Prepare plan detailing expected impact of service changes, including any forecasted ridership impacts
  - Provide scope, schedule and budget, including sources for local match and long-term funding (if applicable)
  - Detail accompanying capital investment needs
  - Summarize project readiness

# Implementation Strategy

## Demonstrating Transit Congestion

### **Productivity**

- Peak hour passenger boardings

### **In-vehicle crowding**

- Load Factor (passengers per seat)
- Standing Passenger Area (space [m<sup>2</sup>] per passenger)

### **Others**

- Park and Ride lot demand exceeding capacity
- Bus stop crowding – dwell times
- Passengers left behind at stops/stations
- Wait times

# Implementation Strategy

## Evaluation Criteria

- Ranking based on:
  - Extent to which proposed service is anticipated to address transit congestion
  - Completeness and quality of proposal
  - Estimated total capital and operating costs
  - Project readiness
  - Commitment of local funds
- Selection based on available funding for top-ranked proposals

# Implementation Strategy

## Monitoring

- Annual documentation of ridership, other performance measures to gauge success of the program
  - Apply applicable transit congestion measures to track performance
- Extent of local funding support
- Track for two years beyond completion of program
  - Provides baseline for consideration of continuation of pilot

# Comments/Feedback

# Fulfillment of Transit Dependent Outcomes

# Key Takeaways

## Prior Working Group Meetings

- **Objective:** To improve access to transit service by persons who are dependent on transit
- General support for discretionary assistance supporting:
  - New/improved service for persons dependent on transit
  - Provide transit service in areas without existing service
  - Fund fare reduction or taxi vouchers program for persons dependent on transit
- Some support for formula funding to address objective
- Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements are not a barrier to implementing this program on a pilot basis
  - Agencies should structure transit service standards and policies to exclude temporary pilot programs from consideration

# Key Takeaways

## Prior Working Group Meetings (continued)

- General agreement regarding basic program structure:
  - Combined application for capital and operating costs
  - Should favor applicants who commit to locally funding program after state funding assistance expires
  - Allows state to learn from pilot before attempting to integrate into primary operating funding formula
- Application should detail:
  - Proposed plan to accomplish the congestion mitigation goal
  - Estimated operating cost of the service
  - Estimated capital investment to provide service
- 2-year grant duration
- Award of discretionary grant based on project ranking

# Implementation Strategy

## Discretionary Pilot Program

- Structure according to key takeaways from prior working group meetings
- Participation open to all agencies in the Commonwealth
- Pilot through existing Demonstration Project Assistance program
- Maximum state matching ratio of 80 percent (remainder local match) – step down funding over time

# Implementation Strategy

## Application Process

- Identify transit dependent population and specify need for transit enhancements
  - Specify location of proposed transit enhancements
  - Identify target population (location, demographics, socioeconomics, etc.) and, if applicable, compare to full service area or region
  - Summarize need for transit enhancements
- Describe proposed operating solutions
  - Explain how program will address needs of transit dependent persons
  - Summarize anticipated impact of program, including ridership impacts
  - Provide scope, schedule and budget, including sources for local match and long-term funding (if applicable)
  - Detail accompanying capital investment needs
  - Summarize Project readiness

# Implementation Strategy

## Definition of Transit Dependent Persons

Persons who are transit dependent identify with one or more of the following characteristics:

- Zero-vehicle household
- Disability
- Below 50 percent of median family income level
- Elderly (over 65 years of age) and youth (below driving age)
- Other criteria

# Implementation Strategy

## Suggested Measures

### **Zero-vehicle household (ACS)**

- Percent of households without a vehicle
- Percent of persons taking transit to work

### **Disability (ACS)**

- Percent of persons having difficulty doing errands alone because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition

### **Low Income (ACS)**

- Percent of persons total income below 50% of median family income level

### **Age (ACS)**

- Percent of persons over the age of 65
- Percent of persons below the driving age

### **Others (ACS and NTD)**

- Number of passenger trips for transit dependent persons
- Transit service level per capita

# Implementation Strategy

## Evaluation Criteria

- Ranking based on:
  - Extent to which proposed program addresses needs of persons who are dependent on transit
  - Completeness and quality of proposal
  - Estimated total capital and operating costs
  - Project readiness
  - Commitment of local funds
- Selection based on available funding for top-ranked proposals

# Implementation Strategy

## Monitoring

- Annual documentation of ridership to gauge success of the program
- Extent of local funding support
- Track for two years beyond completion of program
  - Provides baseline for consideration of continuation of pilot

# Comments/Feedback

Transit Dependent Outcomes

# Data Collection

# Data Collection Task Timeline

- Data Collection Technical Memo (draft upcoming):
  - Literature review
  - Comprehensive agency survey and interview findings
  - Peer interview findings
  - **Recommendations on data standards: definitions, collection methods, processes, verification, accountability policy**
  - Takeaways from today's meeting
- Next Steps:
  - OLGA system evaluation
  - Development of data standards: detailed definitions, processes, verification, accountability policy (April-May)

# Today: Data Collection Standards and Recommendations

- Recap of takeaways from past discussions
- Review data collection practices in North Carolina
- Discuss potential standards for data collection
- Discuss accountability policy

# Key Data Collection Takeaways To Date

## Data Standard Considerations

- Technology improves data accuracy and verification
  - Creates ongoing responsibilities (training, maintenance, upgrades)
- Positive cost-benefit of obtaining electronic tools is not a given for some agencies
  - Depends on agency goals, capabilities, vehicles used
- Verification process usually includes checking one data source against another
  - More sources of data accessible, more robust the process
- Standards should be based on agency capabilities, rather than rural/urban distinction

# Key Data Collection Takeaways To Date

## State Improvements to Reporting Process

- Clarify data definitions in all written/online locations
- Searchable frequently asked questions (FAQ) of data requirements
- Single point of DRPT contact to resolve definition interpretations
- Build identification of major variances and feedback into OLGA when data initially submitted

# Key Data Collection Takeaways To Date

## State Technical Assistance

- Provide annual forum for agency executives
- Industry best practices, agency exchanges, technology information exchanges, data summits
- State assistance with spec writing
- State assistance with joint procurements
- Approved state contract product order lists
- Provide information on best accurate and reliable technology sources for agencies of all capabilities
  - e.g., availability of driver-friendly simplified electronic technology for ridership counting

# North Carolina Practices Summary

Allocation	Reporting Process	State Verification Process	Technical Assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides administrative and operating funds to 5311 agencies; funding for the use of capital projects allocated on a case-by-case basis</li> <li>• Allocated state funding based on FTA allocation model</li> <li>• Uses reported data to benchmark local agency performance statewide; not to allocate state funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies submit data to state via OPSTATS (Operating Statistics) report – an Excel workbook designed for tracking data</li> <li>• Report data quarterly; quarterly data figures summed to create annual numbers</li> <li>• Contract with NC State to assist DOT in compiling annual data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance review: check historical data for agencies to see if trends are reasonable</li> <li>• If agencies are found to be non-compliant with federal or state reporting guidelines, penalties resulting in loss of funding administered by state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual conference for federal and state grant training, peer exchange</li> <li>• One-on-one assistance from the state for an agency request</li> <li>• NC State ITRE holds webinars for new transit directors on technological issues</li> <li>• Rural systems eligible for state funding to procure routing software after meeting minimum trip threshold</li> </ul>

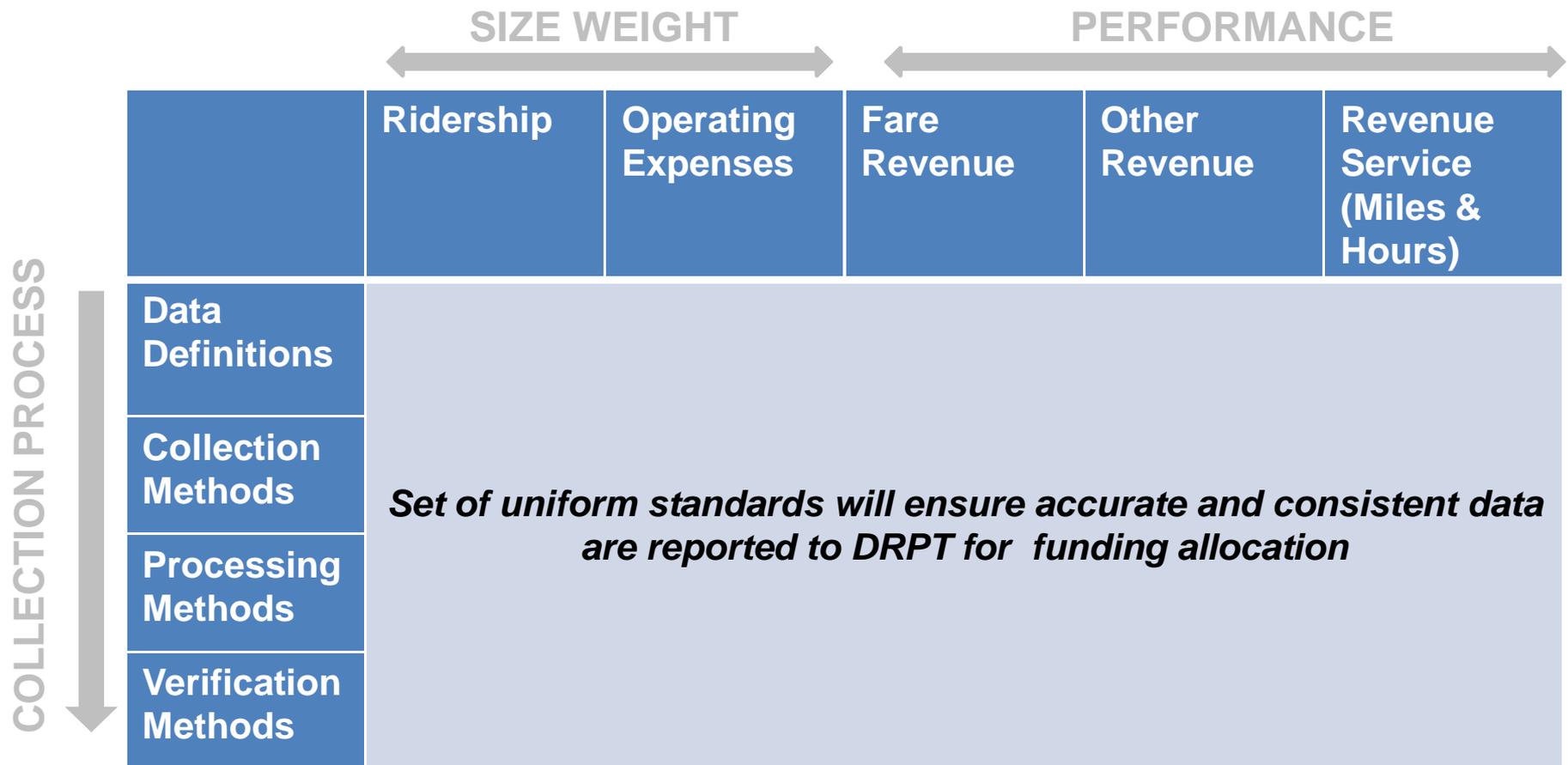
# North Carolina Practices Benchmark Measures

Benchmark Measure	Fixed Route	Urban Demand Response /ADA	Rural Demand Response
Passengers trips/vehicle mile	X	X	X
Passenger trips/vehicle hour	X	X	X
Cost/passenger trip	X	X	X
Cost/vehicle mile	X	X	X
Cost/vehicle hour	X	X	X
Vehicle miles/vehicle	X	X	X
Passenger trips/driver FTE	X	X	X
Accidents/100,000 vehicle miles	X	X	X
Revenue miles between failures	X	X	X
Recovery ratio	X		
No shows as a percent of passenger trips		X	X

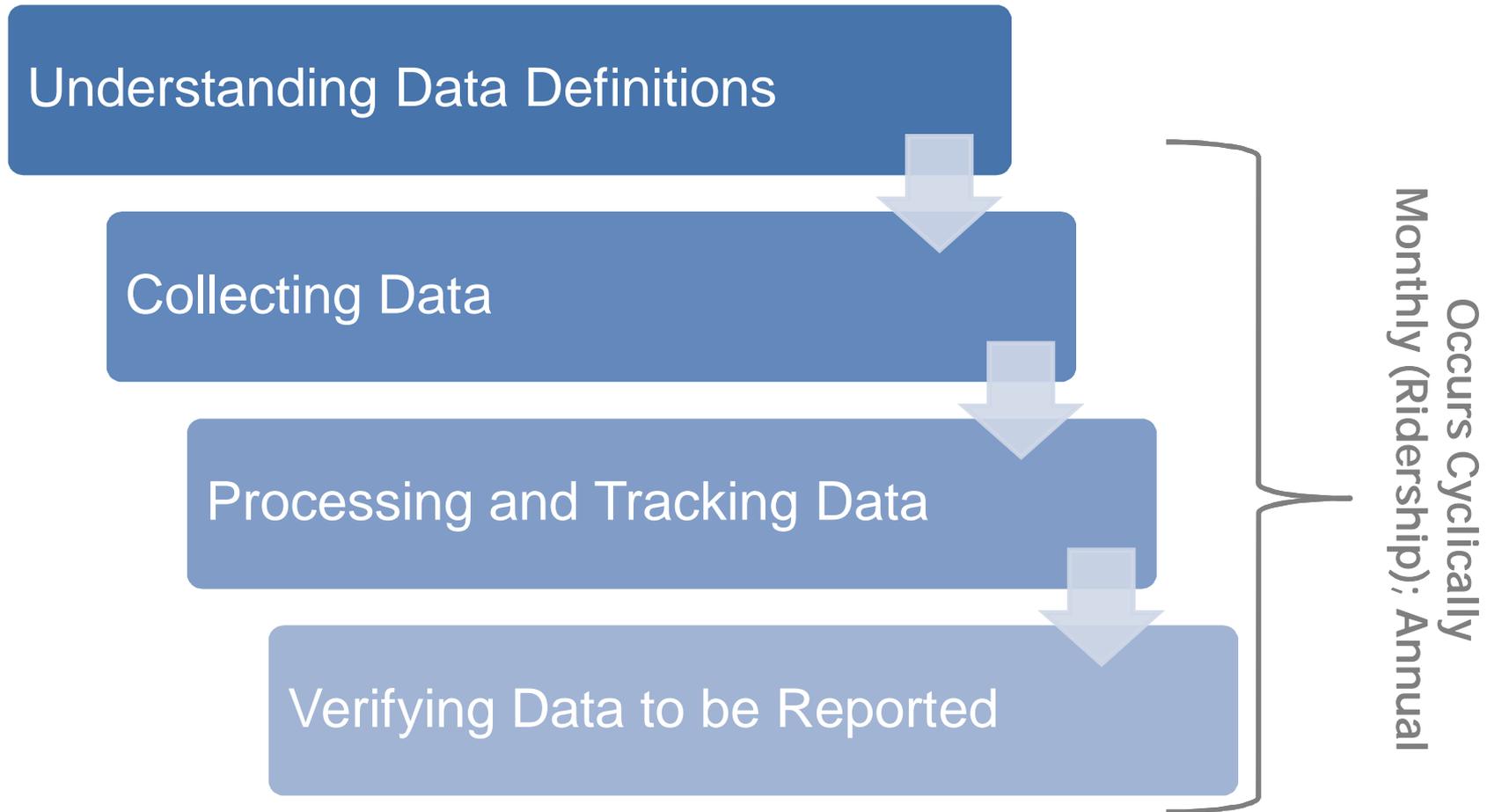
# North Carolina Practices Benchmark Measures

- Goals for benchmarking:
  - Provide peer comparison tool of agencies
  - Improve efficiency and effectiveness
  - Create minimum standards for performance that transit agencies must meet (requested by Board of Transportation and legislature)
  - In the future, link benchmarking to funding to reward performance

# Data Standards Needed



# Data Collection Process



# Data Definitions Standards

## Understanding Data Definitions

- DRPT has established definitions for reported data categories
  - New definition standards are not needed

### ***Recommendations:***

- Create guidance with clear definitions required by DRPT
- Clarify differences between DRPT and NTD definitions when applicable

# Data Collection Methods

## Standards Needed

Understanding Data Definitions

Collecting Data

- Agencies use a variety of tools to collect data
  - Tools used based on factors including size, type of service offered, agency resources and capacity
- If standards are applied based on agency capability (not peer group distinction),

***How do we create incentives to encourage agencies to embrace more accurate and/or verifiable technology for data collection?***

# Data Collection Methods Ridership Standards

Understanding  
Data Definition

Collecting Data

## ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

### Fixed-Route Service:

- Agencies using all-electronic methods
  - ERFs with/without APCs
- Agencies using all-manual methods
  - Cash fare box and manual entry (either electronic click counter or tally sheet)
- Combination of electronic and manual methods
  - ERFs and manual entry

# Data Collection Methods Ridership Standards (cont.)

Understanding  
Data Definition

Collecting Data

## ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

### Demand Response Service:

- Electronic
  - Mobile Data Terminal; e.g., vehicle units, handheld devices
  - Dispatching software
- Manual
  - Written logs

# Data Collection Methods

## Op Expense Standards

Understanding  
Data Definition

Collecting Data

### ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

Operating expenses recorded using agency or local government financial/accounting software (e.g., Oracle People Soft)

# Data Collection Methods

## Fare Revenue Standards

Understanding  
Data Definition

Collecting Data

### ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

#### Fixed Route Service:

- Electronic
  - ERF
- Manual
  - Pay on board
  - Manual count of free fares

#### Demand Response Service:

- Pre-payment
- Pay on board

# Data Collection Methods

## Other Revenue Standards

Understanding  
Data Definition

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Collecting Data

### ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

Other operating revenue collected via accounts receivable in agency or local government financial/accounting software

# Data Collection Methods

## Revenue Service Standards

Understanding  
Data Definition



Collecting Data

### ***Minimum practice recommendation:***

#### Electronic Methods

- AVL system
- Scheduling software
- Mobile data terminals

#### Manual Methods

- Driver logs

# Data Collection Methods

## Standard Recommendation

Understanding  
Data Definition

Collecting Data

### ***Reporting standard for data collection methods:***

- Must be clearly documented in accountability policy
- Reviewed annually by agency with DRPT reporting deadline

***Goal:*** Move agencies toward more consistently accurate, reliable and verifiable methods

- i.e., electronic tablets for recording ridership, ERFs for all

# Data Processing Methods

## Standards Needed



- To ensure accuracy and consistency for DRPT, base standards needed for:
  - Database used to track data
  - Methodology for calculating final reported figures
- Standards needed for ridership, fare revenue, revenue service
  - Financial data (i.e., operating expense, other revenue) subject to accounting standards

# Data Processing Methods Standards

Understanding  
Data  
Definitions

Collecting  
Data

Processing  
and Tracking  
Data

## ***Minimum practice recommendations for ridership, fare revenue, revenue service:***

- Raw data uploaded or transcribed daily or weekly
  - Organized by route, driver, or vehicle in database
- Electronic database (e.g., Microsoft Excel, Access) must be used to track and calculate data

**Goal:** DRPT-created spreadsheet templates for all data categories; agencies submit completed spreadsheets as attachment to OLGA annual submissions

# Data Verification Methods

## Standards Needed

Understanding Data Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking Data

Verifying Data to be Reported

- Critical for agency and state to ensure data accuracy
- Methodology should document at the agency level:
  - Techniques used for verification
  - Frequency of verification
  - Degree of variance that automatically triggers staff review

# Data Verification Methods Ridership Standards

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

## ***Minimum technique recommendation for all ridership methods:***

- Transit agency staff review
  - Year-to-year comparison for variance, and/or
  - Automated database trigger to flag anomalies
- Cross check between 2 or more ridership data sources
  - e.g., ride check sampling (NTD standards) and 100% counts

# Data Verification Methods

## Op Expense Standards



### ***Minimum technique recommendation for operating expense data:***

- Auditing process for all financial data
- Transit agency staff review
  - Year-to-year comparison for variance, and/or
  - Automated database trigger to flag anomalies

**Question:** What level of increase or decrease in expenses year-to-year should require detailed explanation by line item?

# Data Verification Methods

## Fare Revenue Standards

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

### ***Minimum technique recommendation for all fare revenue collection methods:***

- Transit agency staff review
  - Cross check against passenger counts
  - Surveys of portion of vehicles (video or ride check) when revenue numbers are not distinguished by passenger type
  - Periodic audits (random reasonableness checks of specific routes, times of day, year to year)
  - Year-to-year comparison for variance, and/or
  - Automated database trigger to flag anomalies

# Data Verification Methods

## Other Revenue Standards

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

***Minimum technique recommendation for other revenue data:***

- Official auditing process to certify accounting practices
- Transit agency staff review
  - Year-to-year comparison for variance, and/or
  - Automated database trigger to flag anomalies
- Cross check between 2 or more other revenue data sources
  - e.g., revenue invoices and accounts receivable

# Data Verification Methods

## Revenue Service Standards

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

### ***Minimum technique recommendation for revenue service data:***

- Transit agency staff review
  - Year-to-year comparison for variance, and/or
  - Automated database trigger to flag anomalies

# Data Verification Methods Standards Recommendation

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

## ***Verification method recommendation:***

- Document verification technique with state through accountability policy
  - Minimum technique recommendation on previous slides
- Ridership and fare revenue verified monthly to match reporting schedule
- Ops expense and other revenue verified annually to match auditing schedule
- Revenue service verified annually to match reporting schedule

# Data Verification Methods Standards Recommendation

Understanding Data  
Definitions

Collecting Data

Processing and Tracking  
Data

Verifying Data to be  
Reported

- Agency to implement variance check with past year verified data prior to reporting to DRPT:



## ***Recommendations:***

- DRPT incorporate automatic triggers into OLGAs reporting to flag data anomalies
- DRPT transit managers verify that agencies adhere to data collection standards

# Accountability Policy

- Culmination of data reporting process; certification of accountability policy should occur annually with OLGA reporting
- Should include documented list of collection and verification methodologies for all data categories required for allocation formula
- Certified by local agency senior staff (e.g., CFO, other senior executive staff)
  - Understanding that accuracy of reported data is tied to funding
  - Verification procedures documented for each data category have been followed consistently
- Penalties enforced if state reviews reveal consistently inaccurate data reporting, or if reports are consistently delayed
  - Rescind partial awarded funding
  - Penalties for future grant awards

# Data Standards Matrix

	Large Urban or College Town fixed route service	Small Urban or Rural fixed route service	Demand Response service
COLLECTION PROCESS ↓	Data Definitions Existing DRPT data definitions <b>DRPT to clearly document and distribute definitions</b>		
	Collection Methods Electronic: ERF, AVL system, scheduling software, accounting/payroll systems	Manual: cash fareboxes, manual ridership count including free fares, scheduling software <b>Agencies to move to simple electronic systems in 3 years</b>	Mobile data terminals, scheduling software
	Processing Methods Electronic database (e.g., Microsoft Excel, Access) <b>DRPT to create spreadsheet templates to institute uniform calculations</b>		
	Verification Methods Staff review for anomalies; cross check 2 or more sources of data <b>DRPT to incorporate automatic variance flags into OLGA</b>		
	Data Collection		

# Next Steps

- Data collection practices
  - Draft Report: Findings on data collection methods and technology
- Sizing of transit systems
  - Draft technical memorandum complete
- Exceptional transit performance
  - Draft Report: Funding allocation scenarios
- Other Possible Performance Measures
  - Draft Report: Assessment of potential measures

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